

Assessment of DRPT's Performance and Options to Strengthen DRPT Early Action Report April 9, 2007

I. Project Background and Approach

AECOM Consult is at the mid-point in an Organizational Assessment of the Virginia Department Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). DRPT requested an assessment that would take place in three parts – an assessment of DRPT's performance to date, development of options to strengthen DRPT, and development of final recommendations that will provide input into DRPT's Strategic Business Plan. AECOM Consult has substantially completed the first two parts of its analysis, and this report summarizes the early findings. Throughout this report, and particularly in PART III regarding improvement opportunities, actions that can be taken in the near term to take advantage of current status and in anticipation of the longer term business strategy as it evolves are emphasized in ***bold italicized*** typeface.

Summary of Scope of Work

The scope of work for the first two parts of the Organizational Assessment includes a focus on the following subject areas:

- DRPT Overall Performance
- Customer Perceptions of DRPT Performance
- Options to Strengthen DRPT: Strategies for Improvement

The remaining work on the assessment will involve receiving stakeholder feedback on the preliminary findings summarized in this report, refining the analysis conducted in the above subject areas, and developing final recommendations that will provide input into DRPT's Strategic Business Plan.

Project Approach

AECOM Consult has utilized a team of consultants with broad and deep expertise including state and transit agency organizational assessments and re-engineering, grant and financial management, strategic and transportation planning, and rail planning and analysis. It has specific experience related to each aspect of the organizational assessment at the federal, state and/or local level.

Project Methodology

AECOM Consult has reviewed existing DRPT documents, and past interviews and customer outreach. It also has conducted more than 30 additional internal and external interviews, and has conducted best practices research to provide a variety of options for strengthening DRPT. It has reviewed its findings with DRPT's executive staff, and provided input to the on-going stakeholder workshops being conducted by DRPT.

II. AECOM Consult's Preliminary Findings

Section 33.1-391.5 of the Code of Virginia gives a detailed list of the responsibilities of DRPT. The entire code section is contained in Appendix A of this report. DRPT is specifically mandated to address the public transportation, travel demand management (TDM), ridesharing, passenger rail, and freight rail needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia. DRPT has summarized the primary responsibilities related to these transportation modes in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of DRPT Responsibilities

<u>Category</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Economic & Financial Analysis Capabilities	Present future needs and economic feasibility
	Develop uniform financial & operating data & evaluation criteria for agency programs
Accountability	Evaluate and monitor the performance of agency programs and rail/transit operations in VA
Planning and Programming	Formulate and implement plans and programs
	Improve mobility and promote safety
	Provide training and technical support
Coordination	With VDOT, local/federal agencies, task forces, other entities

II.A. DRPT Overall Performance

Economic & Financial Analysis Capabilities

II.A.1. While partially understanding current statewide transportation funding needs, DRPT does not have a complete or accurate understanding of future statewide transportation needs or economic feasibility.

DRPT's has an incomplete understanding of statewide public transportation benefits, TDM and rail funding needs and economic feasibility. Its understanding of transportation funding needs is limited both by the lack of analysis applied to existing inputs from grantees, and by the lack of updated, statewide, inter-modal transportation planning documents. This has prevented the formulation of a clear and insightful strategic plan.

DRPT's most detailed understanding of capital funding needs is reflected in the first 2 years of the six year plan. However, DRPT does not currently analyze these inputs relative to industry experience, and longer-term forecasts are limited due to the lack of detail and focus from most grantees on future-year capital funding requirements. DRPT does not independently validate operating costs as they relate to formula assistance and cannot project or forecast these costs in an accurate manner. As a result, it does not have a good understanding of the operating funds it can provide relative to the future operating needs of the transit agencies it supports.

DRPT does not regularly conduct independent statewide assessment of present and future needs across public transportation, transportation demand management (TDM), ridesharing, passenger rail, and freight rail programs. DRPT has not been able to sustain a role in multimodal transportation planning consistent with the role of rail and public transportation in Commonwealth transportation policy. DRPT's 2004 planning documents including the Virginia State Rail Plan and the Rail, Transit and TDM Needs Assessment provide only a partial analysis of the funding needs of the state. Ongoing planning work with

a sustained effort to analyze and forecast needs is prerequisite to improving the assessment of needs. A comprehensive evaluation of the funding needs and alternatives would require a reliably funded, regularly updated study, and significantly more information on asset condition and replacement needs from grantees.

DRPT also does not evaluate the likelihood of the six-year plan not being achieved due to funding constraints at the local, state or federal level, and as such, has not determined the economic feasibility of proposed projects. This is reflected in the ability of grantees to apply for state funding for transit capital projects without providing evidence of the federal and local funding to match the projects.

II.A.2. DRPT does not perform consistent and comprehensive evaluation of the transportation activities it funds.

While DRPT collects data required for the distribution of the formula funds established by the Code of Virginia, it does not have in place criteria or uniform data inputs for evaluating all public transportation activities in a uniform and comprehensive manner. DRPT collects financial and operational data from grantees necessary for awarding and distributing funds, but does not regularly audit the data submitted. While the data submitted on capital and operating expenditures by grantee could serve as a useful input for evaluation, DRPT has not established an evaluation process that makes use of this data.

DRPT also collects public benefits data required for the award, distribution and future auditing of the Rail Enhancement Fund and Rail Preservation Program (which must have public benefits in excess of costs), but the actual benefits achieved by these grant-funded projects are not yet measured or audited.

DRPT has not established expected benefits or performance measures for transit activities, and as a result does not collect sufficient data to establish the benefits and impacts of its investments. DRPT could better address the transportation funding debate with stakeholders if it were to more fully audit and evaluate the public benefits of all public transportation activities.

DRPT currently measures its performance mainly based on an activity or output basis. Such measures include number of grants issued and amount of funding managed. There is substantial room to improve the Department's measurement of strategic results, particularly in providing an objective assessment of the public benefits of each project and return on investment of state funds. There is not currently sufficient funding or staffing available to collect the information on a statewide basis that would support these calculations, but DRPT is in the process of identifying which data would be most useful to support this effort.

Accountability

II.A.3. DRPT lacks systematic compliance reviews designed to evaluate and monitor the performance of agency programs and rail/transit operations in Virginia.

DRPT conducts its federally-required process for reviewing rural and community transit (Section 5310 and 5311) grantees according to its State Management Plan. It also monitors its projects and grants, with particular attention paid to ensuring rail investments have been accurately carried out and recent attention to monitoring the financial status of various public transit capital grants. However, DRPT conducts limited overall monitoring of projects and grants, and lacks an overall plan for compliance and status reviews. Only a limited number of on-site reviews and audits are conducted, partly due to grant programming and administration tasks being handled by the same individuals.

DRPT does not have a systematic program of conducting compliance reviews or audits to ensure that grantees are completing projects and managing grant funds as required by state grant contracts. A systematic plan could include both monitoring to ensure compliance with state contracts and evaluation of the performance of the grantee and/or project with respect to state-established goals and performance measures (referred to under finding II.A.2). DRPT could benefit from developing uniform policies and

procedures for the conduct of compliance and status reviews and audits, and a schedule that assigns responsibility for the regular reviews to staff.

Planning and Programming

II.A.4. While contributing to transportation planning and programming, DRPT has low profile in the statewide planning process and lacks the resources to fully participate.

DRPT most significantly contributes to the planning and programming process through the allocation and disbursement of funds that support the transit, TDM, ridesharing, rail and innovative technology needs of the Commonwealth. Among grantees, DRPT is an important partner in funding both operating and capital expenses. In the rail industrial access, preservation and enhancement programs, Virginia's program has been a model for many other states in terms of its success in attracting business and promoting economic development.

However, DRPT has a low profile in many of the significant decision-making institutions and processes in Virginia, including at Northern Virginia's Transportation Planning Board (TPB) and at many other MPO meetings. This is driven by DRPT's lack of dedicated resources for planning, lack of a seat at the table in the case of the TPB, and lack of a developed long-range strategic plan to advance rail, transit and congestion management in Virginia. Most planning resources are made available as a reaction to General Assembly or stakeholder requests, are often conducted under tight timeframes, and are not connected to broader strategic vision.

II.A.5. DRPT does not fully participate in proposing alternatives to meet the mobility needs of the state.

DRPT has a limited role in many regional and MPO planning meetings, and in the entire statewide planning process that originates and is shaped at these meetings. With further focus and resources, DRPT could increase its role in promoting public transit and rail. In particular, by putting more resources into TDM and congestion management programs, it could have a greater impact on improvements in mobility across all modes. In addition, there are significant freight and passenger rail corridor needs, most notably in the I-81 freight corridor and the I-95 passenger corridors. Each of these corridors present serious mobility challenges for the state, but DRPT also has an opportunity to have meaningful participation if additional funding is identified.

In addition, with regards to promoting rail, DRPT does not play a lead role in initiating most studies. Rather, it the General Assembly and CTB initiate most studies, with DRPT collaboration. DRPT could be more proactive if it had greater ability (funding and/or staff) to initiate studies on its own, in particular strategic studies intended to determine the strategic importance of respective corridors. With ongoing planning efforts, DRPT would stay abreast of which corridors have greatest benefits to the Commonwealth and thereby DRPT could better advise and make recommendations to the Secretary, Governor, CTB, and legislators.

II.A.6. DRPT could substantially improve its efforts to promote safety through qualified staff or contractor resources.

DRPT's current involvement in promoting safety and security through the federally required state safety oversight program for urban rail transit systems is through staff assignment to the Tri-state Oversight Committee, and planned oversight of the proposed Norfolk Light Rail Transit system. However, unlike many state oversight programs around the nation, DRPT does not require specific technical background and experience for the staff involved in these committees. Developing more qualified staff resources to support the safety oversight needs of the state could substantially improve DRPT's efforts to promote safety.

The current DRPT Safety and Security Coordinator is performing coordinating functions with other departments of state government, has been conducting on-site reviews of public transportation safety,

security, and emergency preparedness programs, and will be developing with the Executive Staff alternative program options for fuller implementation of the safety and security role in the public transportation agencies.

A final area of potential improvement in promoting safety is in the area of freight rail safety. Many other states have made significant progress through focused investments, such as the Sealed Corridor program in North Carolina. Identifying such opportunities for Virginia, and prioritizing their implementation, requires specialized technical skills both for evaluating and prioritizing opportunities, and for project execution once the priorities have been funded.

II.A.7. DRPT could increase the public benefits of rail and public transportation through enhanced technical support and training.

DRPT's transit training and technical assistance is mainly focused on supporting the grantee applications for funding, and the subsequent implementation of the grant-funded projects, with special focus on preparing rural and small urban grantees for the application process. In addition, DRPT provides substantial technical assistance in the area of small vehicle procurement, through its assistance in linking grantees to vehicles that have been pre-approved for procurement by the Department of General Services (DGS). Additional technical support involves the TDM and ridesharing programs, paratransit eligibility criteria, information technology sharing from system to system, and training conferences particularly for small urban and rural systems.

There is substantial public benefit in providing additional technical assistance services and transit training. These services could include expanded technical assistance to smaller grantees in areas such as capital needs planning, or even driver training. Other potential benefits could be produced through providing assistance with major facility projects, or with statewide procurement of technology such as demand response dispatch software. DRPT has not played a large role in the communication of rail and public transportation's benefits to the public and other important stakeholders. In particular, rural and small urban areas have significant need for support in communicating the benefits of public transportation, as their organizations are typically limited in the technical and advocacy resources available.

Increased technical support could also play a role in reaching the goals for managing the rail capital improvement projects such as the Washington to Richmond I-95 rail corridor and the I-81 freight rail corridor. This project is significantly delayed and certain project elements are over budget. The overall completion of the project has been slower than planned, and the benefits that are to result from the investments have also not been achieved as planned.

Coordination

II.A.8. DRPT's efforts to coordinate with other state, regional and local agencies and other stakeholders are limited by lack of clarity in DRPT's role as well as lack of resources.

DRPT's lack of reliable funding for ongoing strategic and transportation planning limits its efforts to work with other agencies. DRPT lacks its own dedicated resources to allow it to develop plans and policies that make it a strong partner in coordinating with other agencies and stakeholders. As a result, DRPT is often not involved at the beginning of key transportation planning initiatives, and does not have full opportunity to develop transportation alternatives that might complement or compete with other modes.

II.B. Customer Perceptions of DRPT Performance

AECOM Consult conducted numerous stakeholder and customer interviews, as well as reviewed interviews conducted at DRPT's direction in 2006. These interviews included conversations with elected officials who interact with DRPT through MPOs, legislative staff, current and past members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, former Directors of DRPT, a former Secretary of Transportation, and selected transit agency staff. A number of themes emerged in these interviews:

1. Grantees felt that programs and funding were adequately distributed, but that funding levels were not as high as they should be.
2. DRPT's participation and role at MPO and other local government meetings was considered low. Some MPO chairs did not have any particular interaction with DRPT, although their technical staff did. The staff assigned to attend MPO meetings were not always perceived as speaking on a policy level for the Department.
3. MPO and the Transportation Planning Board meetings were seen as dominated by highway concerns, and the state votes controlled by VDOT.
4. Rural and small urban areas did not perceive DRPT as providing strong support in their communities.
5. At most MPOs and policy-making institutions, DRPT is not perceived as playing a role proportionate to its prominence in Commonwealth transportation policy.
6. Areas with developed TDM or congestion management programs did not perceive that DRPT played the key role in defining their programs.

Overall, while customers see DRPT as fulfilling the funding responsibilities of its mission within the funding levels provided, customers also saw many opportunities for DRPT to play a greater role in meeting Commonwealth transportation needs.

III. Options to Strengthen DRPT: Strategies for Improvement

A number of early goals can be established at this stage of the Organizational Assessment, providing a guide to early actions that DRPT may seek to pursue:

1. Need to increase economic and financial **benefit analysis** capabilities, including **managing assets** and measurement of statewide needs.
2. Need to increase DRPT's ability to participate fully in the **strategic** and statewide, **multimodal planning process**, including full coordination with other MPOs, agencies and stakeholders.
3. Need to increase public awareness of DRPT, including increasing advocacy related to meeting the public transportation and rail needs of Virginia and demonstrating the **public benefits of public transportation and current projects such as I-95 corridor development and the I-81 freight rail corridor study**.
4. Need to provide additional technical assistance, evaluation and **triennial compliance reviews**, as well as continuing support to grantees for grant applications and funding. Staff attention is currently split among many competing priorities in interacting with grantees.

These goals can be pursued through a number of strategies, as outlined below.

III.A. Clarify organizational responsibilities for interaction with grantees

The existing organizational structure provides a single point of contact with many grantees, but DRPT is not consistent in the approach to carrying out the variety of functions involved with grantee relationships. These functions include support in the grant application process, issuance of grant agreements and contracts, approval of invoices, evaluation of grantee performance and compliance, and other technical assistance. In most cases, a single individual can not adequately provide all functional responsibilities in a complete and adequate manner.

DRPT can address the need for these activities by clarifying the roles within DRPT, and providing a logical division of responsibilities. The financial and auditing responsibilities can largely be handled by DRPT's Finance and Administration division, allowing more focus on technical assistance and grantee evaluation to be handled by public transportation, rail or congestion management specialists. As an example, a number of other state transit organizations with similar sized programs have provided similar splits of responsibilities:

- Washington State separates finance and grant agreements from the modal specialists, who focus on grant programs and technical assistance.
- North Carolina and Illinois have established administrative divisions that handle compliance reviews, some financial transactions, and other administrative matters related to grants, while still maintaining grant program expertise within the modal or other technical areas of the Public Transit department.
- Pennsylvania recently implemented an administrative group that handles grant issues that are common across multiple modes, include aspects of the financial and grant agreement processes.

III.B. Provide clear expectations of grantee performance related to state contracts, and establish compliance review program

DRPT has a number of options with regards to strengthening accountability of its grantees regarding the use of grant funds. Among the best practices is the establishment of a well-documented compliance review program, ***such as a triennial audit program***, in which grantees get regular (although not necessarily annual) visits from Department staff or contractors. Many states have adopted a triennial approach similar to that carried out by the federal government, although more frequent visits may occur if major transitions have occurred at the grantee organization or other risk factors are identified. Such field visits can help DRPT ensure that its interests in the capital investments made with Commonwealth funds are protected.

III.C. Supplement the technical capacity of DRPT with a mix of re-defined internal positions and professional services support contracts

The Organizational Assessment has thus far identified numerous additional technical needs, including both the development of key evaluation tools (such as public benefits models and criteria for evaluating transit agency and project performance), as well as providing on-going policy, planning and technical expertise. These needs can be met by a combination of re-defined internal positions and professional services support contracts.

Professional services contracts are especially relevant in cases where key tools need to be developed for on-going use by DRPT or for one-time analysis. Such contracts are also valuable in providing immediate technical expertise to address time-sensitive needs of DRPT, or in providing highly technical skills that would be difficult to obtain through the current DRPT hiring process. Due to the on-call and short-term nature of some of the professional services likely to be required by DRPT, the use of a ***Program Management Consultant Team*** with access to key team members on an as-needed basis could be valuable to DRPT in implementing the supplemental technical capacity.

III.D. Identify statewide transit capital and operating needs

The existing approach to estimating transit capital needs is insufficient. The needs assessment can be addressed through three approaches, which can be triangulated to reach a comprehensive understanding of statewide transit capital needs. These approaches include:

1. Development and implementation of an ***asset management system*** to provide an understanding of the replacement capital needs of transit
2. Identify the theoretical capital expansion needs based on an ongoing forecasting and planning process in ***statewide transportation plans and supporting studies***
3. Support ***local and regional planning*** and continually compile and analyze grantee plans.

By combining and analyzing the three sets of data above, a more complete picture of statewide transit capital needs can be developed. The asset management system does not need to include every asset in order to be effective – it should start with those assets that have the most impact on the overall capital budget, such as vehicles and major facilities.

In addition, careful attention should be paid to capital projects that will have a future impact on operating needs. DRPT needs a more rigorous approach to estimating future operating funding needs. Such forecasts would need solid information about labor cost projections, good inflation estimates for key commodities such as fuel and materials, and information about future service levels and fare policies. By collecting additional information, DRPT would be able to develop a solid understanding of future operating funding needs.

III.E. Develop and provide regular updates of the Statewide Transportation Plans

In addition to understanding the capital replacement needs for transit, the statewide needs across all modes need to be regularly updated so that DRPT can clearly communicate the impact of the funding it administers. A prerequisite to strategic planning, to coordination with other agencies, and to supporting policy-making and legislation is an accurate database, credible forecasting capability, and sound planning of Virginia's emerging rail, public transportation, and demand management systems. Although we are recommending early action in these areas utilizing consultant services, these activities must also be continuous through successive DRPT programs. The best planning practices can respond quickly to new developments, emerging priorities, and changes in policy; however, an understanding of the underlying infrastructure, markets, and transportation systems is essential to ensuring that such responses are economically sound rather than superficial programs to satisfy short-term priorities.

Therefore funding for ***strategic planning, statewide transportation planning, and local and regional planning*** is a high-return investment. Use of a ***Program Management Team*** to design the start-up and transition to a permanent resource with reliable funding is an early action strategy that will pay long-term dividends.

III.F. Demonstrate public benefits of statewide transportation investments through expanding the use of public benefits models and communicating benefits publicly through a web-based Dashboard

DRPT could more clearly communicate the public benefits of investments in rail and public transportation if it expanded the public benefits models used in the rail program to other modes. These results need to be clearly communicated to the public, and a variety of approaches can be used, including development of a dash board to illustrate these benefits publicly on the DRPT web page.

Other states, agencies and even regions within Virginia have provided ample evidence of the importance of providing information on the public benefits of transit to key stakeholders and the general public. This information can be very influential in impacting the transportation funding and policy debate, and DRPT has a significant responsibility to ensure that objective information is available to decision-makers. Key examples of the use of good public benefits information are found in the following:

- Northern Virginia Metrorail (1985 and 1994): Public benefits studies conducted to illustrate to the Virginia legislature and other funding partners the significant economic impact on Virginia of the Metrorail system. These studies were critical to maintaining legislative support for the funding of Metrorail.
- Colorado DOT Front Range Study: Study measured the benefits of re-locating freight traffic off of the Front Range railroad line in order to increase rail capacity, remove freight traffic from congested urban corridors, and provide opportunities for passenger rail development. Study determined recipients of economic benefits and considered a variety of funding solutions based on the results of the analysis.
- Florida DOT High-Speed Rail: Florida DOT studied the economic impacts and transportation impacts of high-speed rail between Orlando and Tampa, which was selected as the first priority corridor over other corridors in the state for high-speed rail development.
- FHWA Corridor Studies: FHWA has considered the impact of highway corridor investments on economic development in order to evaluate potential corridor projects and provide insight to stakeholders interested in the development of various corridors.

III.G. Increase DRPT's ability to participate fully in the *statewide, multimodal planning process*, including full coordination with other agencies and stakeholders through additional planning resources within DRPT

Other states with similar sized programs with respect to urban and rural grantees put considerably more resources into transportation planning.

1. Illinois dedicates 7 staff to:
 - Rail program planning
 - Manage special transit studies
 - Represent the division in regional and state-wide planning and engineering efforts
 - Detailed evaluations and analyses of public transportation and multi-modal projects
2. North Carolina involves more than 6 staff in:
 - Attending MPO and regional planning meetings
 - Participating in regional and system transit studies
 - Managing consultant-led statewide planning contracts
 - Overseeing statewide planning projects in conjunction with MPOs
 - Involvement in feasibility studies for inter-modal and bus maintenance facilities

DRPT can increase the resources applied to planning, both at the specific modal level of rail, public transportation and congestion management, and on a strategic, multi-modal level.

III.H. Increase technical assistance to grantees, with particular emphasis on rural and community transportation

Much of the demand for technical assistance in Virginia comes from small urban and rural grantees. With regard to these grantees, DRPT already offers significant support particularly tied to helping grantees understand and navigate the grant application process, and the subsequent execution of approved projects.

However, many states outside of Virginia provide significantly greater levels of technical assistance to small urban and rural grantees, on top of their management of the Section 5310 and 5311 grant programs. This technical assistance includes:

- Greater field presence
- Driver training courses
- Advising and assisting in the preparation of plans and studies
- Attending local steering committee meetings
- Leading development of Human Services Transportation Plans
- Support for technology investments and procurement, including paratransit dispatch systems and assistance in developing specifications and RFBs/RFPs for key projects
- Statewide vehicle procurement, including large buses

The broader range of services indicated above has led to programs in states with similar size programs with higher levels of staffing focused on community transportation and small urban and rural grantees.

III.I. Increasing DRPT role in passenger rail service

DRPT could benefit from a number of approaches to improving passenger rail service in critical transportation corridors:

1. Leading statewide and/or corridor focused studies to set goals and prioritize capital investments – such studies should involve all stakeholders, demonstrate needs and develop a long-term road map for capital improvements, similar to what California achieved on its 20 Year Plan for its rail

corridors. Accelerating the next stages of *the I-95 Corridor Development* is an example that warrants early action.

2. Establish performance criteria for future capital investments.
3. Conduct detailed options analysis for funding the investments.
4. Consider areas of potential right-of-way acquisition.
5. Increase funding for **strategic planning**.
6. Use the mechanism of the Rail Enhancement Fund to allow DRPT to become more proactive in critical corridor development.

As current investment in the I-95 corridor demonstrates, continued research and planning related to selecting the most effective and beneficial investments in the corridor is a significant component of DRPT's role in improving passenger rail service.

III.J. Increase DRPT's role in congestion management

DRPT can increase and clarify its role in congestion management through considering the following options:

1. State leadership of a statewide TDM plan – North Carolina carried out a statewide planning effort that identified successful TDM practices statewide, and provided state-funded technical assistance in spearheading these practices in new areas.
2. Regional web-based trip planning, combining transit systems with rail – Many areas have started efforts to integrate web planning across multiple transit agencies, even including intercity passenger rail service that may overlap with commuter rail in the region.
3. Development of model ordinances for land use and reduced parking – North Carolina took successful ordinances from various areas of the state and promoted their use as models for other regions.
4. Technical assistance in cross-jurisdictional transportation planning – California Congestion Management Agencies have accepted the role of leading planning efforts that span multiple jurisdictions.
5. Assessment of corridor-related transportation problems and development of integrated programs of desired improvements
6. Consideration and demonstration of congestion pricing
7. Land use planning including traffic impact studies

III.K. Improve State Rail Fixed Guideway Safety Oversight Program by developing greater technical expertise for state representatives

Many other states with safety oversight programs for rail fixed guideway systems require specific transit safety experience for their representatives. DRPT could follow the lead of other states as it prepares to provide the required oversight program for the Norfolk Light Rail system, and consider adopting similar standards for its participants in the Tri-State Oversight Committee in the Metropolitan Washington, DC area.

IV. Next Steps

The next phase of the Organizational Assessment will include development of final recommendations that will provide input into DRPT's Strategic Business Plan. Additional action items will be recommended

APPENDIX A
SECTION 33.1-391.5 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA
RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT

§ [33.1-391.5](#). Responsibilities of Department.

The Department shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Determine present and future needs for, and economic feasibility of providing, public transportation, transportation demand management, and ridesharing facilities and services and the retention, improvement, and addition of passenger and freight rail transportation in the Commonwealth;
 2. Formulate and implement plans and programs for the establishment, improvement, development and coordination of public transportation, transportation demand management, and ridesharing facilities and services, and the retention and improvement of passenger and freight rail transportation services and corridors in the Commonwealth, and coordinate transportation demand management and innovative technological transportation initiatives with the Department of Transportation;
 3. Coordinate with the Department of Transportation in the conduct of research, policy analysis, and planning for the rail and public transportation modes as may be appropriate to ensure the provision of effective, safe, and efficient public transportation and passenger and freight rail services in the Commonwealth;
 4. Develop uniform financial and operating data on and criteria for evaluating all public transportation activities in the Commonwealth, develop specific methodologies for the collection of such data by public transit operators, regularly and systematically verify such data by means of financial audits and periodic field reviews of operating data collection methodologies, and develop such other information as may be required to evaluate the performance and improve the economy or efficiency of public transit or passenger and freight rail operations, transportation demand management programs, and ridesharing in the Commonwealth;
 5. Provide training and other technical support services to transportation operators and ridesharing coordinators as may be appropriate to improve public transportation, ridesharing, and passenger and freight rail services;
 6. Maintain liaison with state, local, district and federal agencies or other entities, private and public, having responsibilities for passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation programs;
 7. Receive, administer and allocate all planning, operating, capital, and any other grant programs from the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and other agencies of the United States government for public transportation, passenger and freight rail transportation, transportation demand management, and ridesharing purposes with approval of the Board and to comply with all conditions attendant thereto;
 8. Administer all state grants for public transportation, rail transportation, ridesharing, and transportation demand management purposes with approval of the Board;
 9. Promote the use of public transportation, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and passenger and freight rail services to improve the mobility of Virginia's citizens and the transportation of goods;
 10. Represent the Commonwealth on local, regional, and national agencies, industry associations, committees, task forces, and other entities, public and private, having responsibility for passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation;
 11. Represent the Commonwealth's interests in passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, and public transportation and coordinate with the Department of Transportation in the planning, location, design, construction, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, purchase, and rehabilitation of facilities and services that affect or are used by passenger and freight rail, transportation demand management, ridesharing, or public transportation;
 12. Coordinate with the State Corporation Commission on all matters dealing with rail safety inspections and rail regulations which fall within its purview;
 13. Prepare and review state legislation and Commonwealth recommendations on federal legislation and regulations as directed by the Secretary of Transportation; and
 14. Promote public transportation, ridesharing, and passenger and freight rail safety.
- (1992, c. 167; 2002, c. 355.)

